

First Year Faculty Experience Workshop V: “The First-Year Faculty Experience of Addressing Student Concerns at UVM”

- Comprehensive Faculty Mentoring Website: <https://www.uvm.edu/dofa/comprehensive-faculty-mentoring-program>
- First-Year Faculty Experience (FYFE) and Demystifying the RPT Process (DRPT) Workshops (all on Teams, beginning at noon):
 - ***Friday, March 21***: FYFE Workshop VI/Demystifying the RPT Process (DRPT) Workshop I: “All Faculty: Preparation for First Reappointment”
 - Further Demystifying the RPT Process Workshops: ***March 26*** (Second Reappointment), ***April 11*** (Tenure and Promotion), ***April 30*** (Focus on NTT Faculty), ***May 2*** (Focus on Historically Underrepresented/Underrecognized Faculty)

Addressing Student Concerns at UVM

New Faculty Professional Development Series

February 21, 2025

Presented By:

Deanna Garrett-Ostermiller, Assistant Director, Center for Student Conduct

Jennifer Papillo, Associate General Counsel

Heather Pena, Assistant Dean of Students



AGENDA

- **Students of Concern – UVM's CARE Team**
- **Addressing Academic Integrity Concerns and working with the Center for Student Conduct**
- **Legal Issues in Classroom Management**

Identifying and Supporting Students of Concerns: CARE Team

Heather Pena, Assistant Dean of Students

Agenda

Context: who are our students and what impacts them?

Identifying Students of Concern

Recognizing Symptoms and Behaviors

Overview of the CARE team and campus resources

Questions / Discussion



Increased complexity
of mental health
issues



Political climate



Climate change &
world events



Social media



Financial concerns



Interpersonal
difficulties



Academic struggles



New independence



Identity Development

Identifying Students of Concerns

Who are Students of Concern?

- Adjustment concerns
- Prolonged absenteeism
- Not thriving or coping poorly
- Basic needs insecurity
- Financial stress
- Substance use problems
- Mental Health (not utilizing supports)
- Physical Health (not utilizing supports)
- Experienced critical or traumatic event

Behavior Check-Points

- Imbalance in emotional response
- Tired, lethargic, sleeping during class/work
- Change in behavior/performance
(absenteeism, appearance, attitude)
- Disconnected from reality / unusual statements
- Disruption, distraction, and/or disrespect showing up in classroom, work, events, public setting.

Role of the Care Team

- CARE: Campus, Assessment, Response, Evaluation
- The Care Team is a group of staff from across campus who help students navigate difficult or challenging situations
- Common areas of support:
 - Mental health
 - Academic struggles
 - Interpersonal conflict
 - Financial challenges/basic needs insecurity
 - Family struggles
 - Isolation

The Care Form

[MENU](#) VICE PROVOST AND DEAN OF STUDENTS OFFICE

CARE Team

The logo features a green hand icon with a heart shape in the palm, followed by the text "UNIVERSITY OF VERMONT" in a smaller green font and "CARETEAM" in a large, bold green font.

The Dean of Students Office's number one priority is to support a healthy and safe community. Occasionally, members of our community find themselves or others in need of additional help and support. If you are concerned about a UVM community member or are concerned about a specific event, contact the Dean of Students Office (802-656-3380).

[SUBMIT A CARE FORM](#) 

[SUBMIT A CARE FORM](#)

[REPORT A BIAS INCIDENT](#)

[STUDENTS OF CONCERN RESOURCES](#)

Lifecycle of a Care Form

INITIAL REVIEW
– CARE TEAM
AND ASSIGN
CASE

STEP 1

RESPONSE /
INTERVENTION:
OUTREACH TO
STUDENT

STEP 3

STEP 2

IF REQUIRED,
REPORT TO UVM
POLICE,
CONDUCT, TITLE
IX, SAS, RESL LIFE,
ACADEMIC UNIT,
ETC

STEP 4

REVIEW: WAS
OUTREACH
EFFECTIVE OR
ADDITIONAL
CASE
MANAGEMENT
NEEDED.

How does your work intersect with Care?

Referral

- Submitting CARE form

Collaborator

- Support student

Resource Partner

- provide additional support

Assist in outreach

- help make connection between student and Care team

BUST THE MYTHS!

The Care Team is 'the fixer'

After Care form is submitted, it is off my plate!

I will only make matters worse for the student if I submit a Care form.

Care forms are anonymous

Concern I have is not important enough to submit a Care form.

Academic Integrity

Academic Integrity concerns can coincide with:

- CARE/students needing additional support
- Disruptive behavior
- Faculty navigating conflict or difficult conversations with students

Academic Integrity Process:

Centralized – all reports go to Center for Student Conduct (CSC)

Faculty submits
online report

CSC meets with
student to
discuss process
and options

Students can choose to:

Accept responsibility and agree to instructor's recommended consequence

- If student agrees, process ends with informal resolution

Go forward to Academic Integrity Council Meeting to determine final outcome

- If student goes to Council Meeting, instructor is invited to participate

Setting Expectations



Communicate clear and specific expectations



Indicate when and how sources should be cited



Note whether students can work together



Be clear about use of technology & accessing information online

Legal Issues in Classroom Management

- Reasonable Accommodations
- Free Expression / Academic Freedom; Due Process

Student Accommodations

- Title III of Americans with Disabilities Act and Sec. 504 of the Rehabilitation Act require universities to make reasonable accommodations for a student with a disability who is otherwise qualified in order to permit the student equal access to programs and services.
- The First Amendment and the Equal Rights Act of 1964 require that individuals be able to practice the religion of their choosing and not face discrimination. Reasonable accommodations ensure compliance.
- Accommodations cannot:
 - Pose an undue hardship on the University
 - Pose a threat to the safety of others
 - Fundamentally alter academic standards

Processing Accommodation Requests

- At UVM, Student Accessibility Services is the only office that can determine eligibility for and parameters of reasonable accommodations based on disability.
- Faculty must refer students to SAS and should not accommodate on an ad hoc basis.
- Faculty are encouraged to consult the Interfaith Calendar when planning key course deadlines to avoid major religious observances.
- It is not our job to question sincerely held religious beliefs when asked for accommodation.

Free Expression

“Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech”

- **UVM must:**
 - uphold and defend the right to free expression, including the freedom to express dissent, within the context of the law and personal responsibility.
 - not suppress expression because the ideas put forth are thought by some, or even by most members of the University community to be offensive, repugnant, or hurtful
 - enforce rules that restrict and sanction those who seek to disrupt the expression of others or otherwise engage in unprotected speech

Location, Location, Location

- Public (Open) Forum
 - Examples: public parks, sidewalks
 - Strongest First Amendment Protection
 - UVM cannot discriminate based on speaker's viewpoint
 - UVM can restrict time, place and manner of speech, but must leave open ample alternatives for expression
- Designated Public Forum
 - Not traditionally public forums, but affirmative decision has been made by property owner to allow for free expression. Take on the protection of Public (open) forums.
 - Examples: Andrew Harris Commons, Davis Center Meeting Rooms
 - Once open, cannot close the forum to a particular viewpoint

What about the classroom?

- Classrooms are not public forums.
 - Expression is limited by the instructor's directions and learning objectives, but still may not engage in viewpoint discrimination.
 - Instructor has authority to limit irrelevant and unreasonable disruption
 - Focus on impact of expression/behavior. Is it severe, pervasive, or objectively unreasonable.
 - Avoid focusing on content of expression/behavior, EXCEPT to focus on germaneness to course learning objective

What does this mean for imposing discipline related to classroom behavior?

- In the Classroom
 - No constitutional property or liberty right implicated
 - Include important behavioral expectations in syllabus
 - Develop a progression that includes a clear warning
- University discipline requires more formal procedures
 - Prior to permanent removal from class or separation from UVM, there must be a meaningful opportunity for the student to respond
 - Student Conduct Procedures prescribe the amount of process
 - Few exceptions enable action prior to process (imminent threat of safety)

Suggested Progression for Faculty

- **Re-direct** - “We are well off course for today, let’s bring it back to the original question . . .” “We are a little far afield, let’s move on to . . .”
- **Reiterate (Warn)** – “Ok, Trent, that is enough on that issue for today. You are interrupting in a way that is not acceptable. Please stop or I must ask you to leave for today.”
- **Remove** – “You are being disruptive. Please leave so we may continue our discussion.” (Schedule office hour appointment to discuss re-entry and set clear expectation)
- **Recess** – “I have asked you to stop and then to leave. You continue to persist. We will pick it up here next time. Class is dismissed for today.” (Schedule office hour appointment to discuss with the student)

You have help!

Faculty response – address behavior in a timely manner. Document appropriately (email follow-up to student, Care Form?). Consult and seek support as needed.

Escalate issue to **Student Services** staff – reinforce behavioral expectations. Document appropriately. Consult and seek support as needed.

Escalate issue to **Academic Dean** – reinforce behavioral expectations and consequences if not met. Consider appropriate actions/interventions to support the student's success and the classroom environment.

Escalate to **VPDOS** – in consultation with all parties involved, coordinate a larger response/intervention plan. Determine if/when CSC should be involved.

Public Order/University Order Offenses 3: Classroom Disruption Offenses

Students who disrupt a classroom, laboratory, or other environment in which educational or research activity takes place may be subject to action under this Code. Disruptive classroom conduct means engaging in behavior that **substantially or repeatedly interrupts** either the instructor's ability to teach or student learning. For purposes of this provision, the classroom extends to any setting where a student is involved in work toward academic credit or satisfaction of program-based requirements or related activities.



Myth Busting

Students can disrupt class without consequence

Students cannot be removed from a class session by faculty when disruption occurs

Academic Deans have no authority over what happens in the classroom

CSC and the Dean of Students can permanently remove a student from class upon request

Every mental health concern = safety concern to the community

Faculty (the person reporting the concern) will get detailed information about any intervention/threat assessment, etc.

There is no support for faculty facing difficult classroom situations.



Questions/ Discussion

Jennifer Papillo
Heather Pena
Deanna Garrett-Ostermiller